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C.R.

A DECLARATION AGAINST A CROSSE PETITION:

WHEREIN

Some secret letts of the intended Reformation are
discovered.

The danger of Division prevented. And
The Unitie of this Iland in Religion urged.

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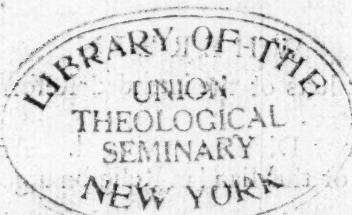
THE COMMISSIONERS
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY.



EDINBURGH,
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1643
Evan Tyler
Printer to the Kings
most excellent Majestie.*

A
MORITZ AARONSON
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He word of G O D, the example of the People of G O D , and of the Kirk of Christ, since the beginning, and our own late , but very notable and never to be forgotten experience, may abundantly teach us , that the motions , resolutions and endeavours of the Godly , for the advancément of the Kingdome of the Son of G O D , by establishing or propagating the Reformation of Religion , must meet with a world of opposition and hinderances, which might make their hearts to faint , and their hands to fail , if upon the same grounds and documents they were not taught to acquit themselves , in doing the dutie required of them by the necessitie of their callings , and for the successse to depend upon the unsearchable wisedome, and invincible power of G O D , which are made perfect in the simplicitie and weaknesse of his servants : *The Zeal of the Lord of hosts will performe it.*

There hath ever been in the Kirk of Christ, and shall be to the end, a generation which maketh more accompt of the World, then of the Faith of Christ, doth conceive that differences about Religion are but the contentions of Kirk-men , that therefore there is no necessitie of the Reformation of Religion , and that to know nothing of this kinde, is the surest Faith, and seeketh in their service to Kings and Princes civilly to supererogate at their hands, beyond the deservings of others and above the expressed desires and commands of Princes themselves, that the rewards of their singular zeal may be the greater, and therefore have proven, and daily doe prove the most pernicious and dangerous enemies of the true Religion : against this

generation, which saith, *Let us deal wisely with them*, we have this comfort and advantage, that we know amongst all the Enemies of the Truth, they least of all think that they doe G O D service.

We who are intrusted for the time, to be the Commissioners of the late Generall Assembly, sitting at Edinburgh for the Affaires of the Kirk committed to our care and diligence; specially for preserving of our own Reformation, and Peace against all sorts of Enemies, and according to the interest of this Kirk for Unitie in Religion and Uniformitie of Government with the Kirk of England, which was no new motion of ours, but a proposition made by the Commissioners of the Treaty, which then received from the Kings Majestie and Parliament of England, such an Answer as hath beene the ground of many Consultations, Declarations and Publick Letters since, and of a renewed supplication at this time to the Kings Majestie, and of a Declaration to the Parliament of England for the same effect. While we are thus exercised, we are desired by some Noblemen, Barons and Burgeses, occasionally met at Edinburgh, to send some of our number to joyne with them in a Petition, representing to the right Honourable the Lords and other Commissioners of Parliament for the conservation of peace, their humble thoughts and feares at the printing of His Majesties Letter of the date, December 5. by Warrant and Command of the right Honourable the Lords of His Majesties Privie Councell, and the riot printing of the Declaration of both Houses of Parliament, unto which the printed Letter was an Answer, might be taken by the Kingdome of England, as an approbation of the whole matter, and all the particulars which it did expresse, and thereby to animate and provoke this Nation against them as Rebels and Traitors;

We

We finding that the Petition did homologate both in the end and meanes with our Commission , and the matter of our present deliberations , did willingly satisfie the desire of the Petitioners , and therefore from our tender and dutifull respect to His Majesties Honour , for preventing and removing of all occasion of jealousies and suspitions betwixt the two Kingdome s , for preservation both of our own peace at home , & our common peace with *England*, and for promoving the so much desired Unitie of Religion , a meane of all other most conducing to the conservation of both , did with them (conforme to the order observed in such cases since the beginning of our late Reformation) humbly supplicate , that the meaning of the publication of His Majesties Letter might be cleared , and that the Declaration of both Houses of Parliament to their Brethren of Scotland might be printed and published , &c.

But behold , after a few dayes a contrary Petition is presented to the Lords of His Majesties Privie Councell , by some private Noblemen , Barons and Gentlemen , which coming to our hands , we found after due examination to be nothing else but a secret plot and subtle under-mining of all the present designes of this Kirk and Kingdome , for Unitie of Religion , and of all the work of God in this Land : And therefore we made upon it the observations and animadversions following .

That private Persons knowing that the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly were sitting at this time about such matters as they meddle with in their Petition , and that we had joyned in presenting a Petition to the Commissioners for conserving of Peace , much about the same particulars , whereof they could not be ignorant by reason of the Act of the late Assembly , they did not so much as acquaint us with their intentions , that we might

I.

either have petitioned with them ; or have advised them to desist : which although it may seem to be but an errour in the manner of their doing, yet doth it imply contempt, usurpation and division ; and being winked at , may be the cause of much disturbance and confusion in these times, especially they professing that they desire to cleare themselves and their intentions, not only to the Lords of Councell , but to the Kings Majestie , to the Kingdome of England , and to all the world , which is nothing else but under the colour of a Petition to make a publick Declaration , contrary to the proceedings, not only of the Generall Assembly and their Commissioners , but also to the desires and diligence of the Commissioners of the Treaty of the honourable Lords of Councell , and of the Conservators of Peace , who have all concurred , and do still concurre in their joyns desires of Unitie of Religion in His Majesties Dominions , resolving to preesse this Unitie to the uttermost of their endeavours as a necessary preservative of our own Reformation and Peace , which without it cannot long subsist ; and much crossing that clause of our Covenant wherein we sweare, that we shall not cast in any lett or impediment that may stay or hinder any such resolution , as by common consent shall be found to conduce for so good ends.

II. Although the Petitioners professe with us that they desire the Union of this Iland in Religion and Kirk-Government , yet their Petition doth too plainly and palpably tend to the contrary, as is apparent by this three-fold consideration : i. For remedie of the divisions and distractions in England , the Petition desireth only *the suppression of insolent Papists, malignant schismaticks, and disloyall Brownists and Separatists; the speciall, if not sole promoters and fomenters of these unhappy mis-understandings:* and thus doth passe by the Prelates, and balketh the Bishops,

Bishops, who have been the most restlesse sticklars in this businesse , and the prime authors of all these tragedies since the beginning, and thereby would take us off our right and straight course of pressing uniformtie in Kirk government , in the Treatie , in our Declarations , and in the Generall Assembly : The Apologists for the petition would have reduced the Prelates either to Papists , or to Sectaries ; but the Authors of the Petition intended better service, by sending the Petition to England, without trenching upon the Lordly Prelacie, or touching the Prelates at all ; which from strangers is an high provocation against the Kingdome and Parliament of England , and no small prejudice against the proceedings of this Kirk and Kingdome for Reformation. 2 This Petition doth indirectly cast foule aspersions upon these who are most zealous for the Reformation in England , and doth very much symbolize with the language of the Popish and Prelaticall party in England ; calling the Parliament, and all that seek after Reformation , *Brownists* , *Separatists* , *Authors of tumultuary conventions* , &c. 3 It hinteth at our zeal and forwardnesse in the matter of the Reformation of the Kirk of England : which may appeare thus ; The Petitioners declare , *That since the duty of charity doth oblige all Christians to pray and professe their desires, that all others were of the same Religion with themselves* , &c. Therefore they represent their wishes for uniuersitie of Religion and Kirk government, as an expression and testimonie of their affection to the good of their brethren in England : Declaring further That *they desire this work to be prosecuted without presuming or usurping to prescribe lawes and rules of Reformation to their Neighbours*. And again they repeat, that *by their wishes and desires they intend no wayes to passe their bounds, in prescribing or setting downe rules and limits to His Majestie and Houses of Parliament* *their*

their wisedome and authoritie, in the way of prosecution hereof.
And why do they so plentifully purge, and carefully clear themselves concerning this particular , if their intention were not to leave some aspersion upon this Kirk and State, as if we were passing our bounds , by presuming to prescribe rules and limits to His Majestic and Houses of Parliament ? For further evidence whereof , it is to be remembred , that in the first part of their Petition they plainly profess , that they are clearing themselves and their intentions, lest they should be thought to be involved with us in the same desires, judgements, and opinions : So that all which they say by way of clearing of themselves and their intentions, ariseth from this ground, that they will not be thought involved with us in our desires, judgements, and opinions ; and so condemne us in these particulars, in which chiefly they justifie themselves: neither can wee knit together their words , or interpret their apologie to another meaning. Now what is this else but to overturne the very foundation of all our endeavours for this work of Reformation, which was the Article of the Treatie for union in Religion, and uniformity in Kirk government ? Not as a matter nakedly desired and wished for , but as a principall demand , and necessary mean , without which neither truth nor peace could be secured unto us. The importance and necessitie whereof hath been since that time so deeply laid to heart by this Kirk and Kingdome, that as the Generall Assembly , and we for our part representing the same , so the Lords of Councell, and the Commissioners of Parliament for conservation of the peace, concurring with us, have been, and are most serious and solicitous in the importunate and earnest pressing of this union in Religion and Kirk government, resolving to use our uttermost endeavours in the prosecuting and effectuating of such a blessed and necessary

necessary work, as being dearer to us then all our Lives and Fortunes : neither did the Generall Assembly spare to represent their humble advice concerning the way of prosecuting that work to the houses of Parliament , and to others seeking after Reformation in England.

Their Petition doth tend to a dangerous division in this Kirk and Kingdome ; for as it doth reflect upon us for our joyning in the Petition concerning His Majesties printed Letter presented to the Commissioners of Parliament, for conservation of the Peace, upon a pretext (as it saith) of the not sitting of the Privie Councell at that time ; so it insinuateth, that we did presume to question or seek of the Lords of Councell an account of their Actions; both which are foule and groundlesse aspersions: yea, it declareth, that the Petitioners doe so far dislike our Petition , that they conceive they were wanting in their dutie and allegiance to the Kings Majesty , if by their silence they should suffer themselves to be involved with us in the like desires , judgements and opinions: thus plainly professing a division and separation , aswell from us , as from other Noblemen , Gentlemen, Burgeses and Ministers, here occasionally met, with whom we joynd in the foresaid Petition. And not content to with-draw themselves from being involved with us , the Petition doth also insinuate, that in their opinion we are involved in the breach of dutie and allegiance to the Kings Majestie; and not we only , but the Commissioners for conserving the Peace, who did hearken and assent to our Petition, and did seriously recommend to the Lords of His Majesties Privie Councell, that part of the Petition which did concerne their Lordships clearing of their meaning in the publication of His Majesties Letter, by their causing print the Declaration of the Parliament of England. The Lords of Councell are likewise involved in the same breach of al-

legiance , by reason of their grant of our desire in causing print the Declaration of both Houses of Parliament, upon the warrant of another Letter from His Majesty , and therewith declaring , that their Lordships publication of any Paper, doth not import their approbation of the contents thereof.

IV. The Petition above-mentioned doth import no small prejudice to the happy Union and late Treaty of Peace betwixt the Kingdomes, insinuating to the Lords of his Majesties Privie Councell, that their Lordships in answering our Petition concerning the clearing of their meaning in the publication of His Majesties Letter , might do no act which may give His Majesty occasion to repent him of that trust for aid and assistance , which He was pleased to declare in his Letter December 5 . that he reposeth in us His Subjects of this His ancient and native Kingdome; whereby the Petitioners do intimate their desires, that the Lords of Councell might not declare that for which we did supplicate , but to declare by their not printing the Declaration of the Parliament, that their Lordships publication of His Majesties Letter did import their approbation of the contents thereof , and so acknowledge their willingness to take Arms against the Parliament of England, upon the grounds contained in that Letter, when His Majesty shall require them so to doe. And for their own part they declare, that they think themselves obliged in every cause which may concerne His Majesties honour to concurre with their friends and followers in quiet manner, or in Arms, as they shall be required of his Majestie, his Councell, or any having his autoritie. Which if understood and applyed aright, no loyal Subject can deny, but it is meant and expressed in their Petition, as in opposition to our Petition; So in contemplation of the Differences betwixt His Majesty, and the Parliament of England, unto which their

their words relate. For they professe to represent such particulars as they are confident will much conduce to the removing of all the mistakes betwixt His Majesty, and the Parliament: of which particulars, that is the first, That according to His Majesties trust expressed in His Letter December 5. the Subjects of this Kingdome declare themselves willing and ready to take Armes in every cause which may concerne His Majesties honour, being required by His Majesty, or any having His Authoritie. And is not this to make void the Treaty, ratified by the publick Faith of this Kingdonie, and Act of Parliament, discharging all taking up of Armes against the Kingdome or Subjects of England, upon any pretence whatsoever, without consent of Parliament, declaring the breach of Peace; and that after three moneths warning? Which treaty the Estates of Parliament did swear to observe inviolably, in the same very oath in which they did swear allegiance to the Kings Majestie, thereby declaring, that the observation of the conclusions of the treaty may well consist with our duty and allegiance to our Sovereigne, whereas the Petition doth indirectly put some aspersion of Læsmajestie upon the Parliament for confirming and swearing to observe the Articles of the Treatie, which in the opinion of the Petitioners are inconsistent with our oath of allegiance. If they say that their Petition did only insinuate that we may not take armes to assist the Parliament against the King, they put upon it a sense which it cannot beare, both because they knew that the supplication of the Noblemen, Barons, and others assisted by us, did not directly nor indirectly containe any such thing, And because His Majesties trust expressed in that Letter (which they desire His Majestie may not have occasion from us to repent) is not only a negative trust, that we will not take armes against him, but a positive

tive trust and confidence , that we will be ready to assist him. And finally, because the clause of the Supplication of the Generall Assembly which they mention as containing our obligation to our Soveraigne, and that in reference to the preuent distractions in England , is positive, and not negative.

Lastly, the Petitioners for their own private ends doe very much wrest and mis-apply our Nationall Covenant, about which the whole Nation and all the Members of the Kirk of Scotland have as great reason, as by the mind of man can be conceived, to be most tender and cautious; and which every one amongst us, according to his place and calling, is obliged to vindicate from every violation; and namely, from sinister glosses , and false interpretations, which may be the fountaine and cause (the Covenant being one principall rule of our actions and undertakings) of many scruples, transgressions, and disturbances. We acknowledge before God , and profess before the World, that by our Covenant we are bound to the utmost of our power , with our meanes and lives, to stand to the defence of our dread Soveraigne the Kings Majestie, his Person and Authoritie, in the defence and preservation of the true Religion, Lawes and Liberties of this Kirk and Kingdome ; likewise in every cause which may concerne his Majesties honour , according to the Lawes of this Kingdome, and the duty of good subjects, to concurre with our friends and followers in quiet manner, and in armes , as we shall be required of His Majestie , his Councell, or any having his authoritie. We know, that he who wilfully transgresseth one Article of the Covenant, it being copulative, is by interpretation guiltie of all. And therefore under the greatest paines expressed in the Covenant, we resolve for our selves, all the dayes of our lives, and doe exhort all others to that duty which they have

have sworne and subscribed to perform to the Kings Majestie : But we desire to know of the Petitioners, who are so ready at this time to make their own conclusions out of the Covenant , which was never intended by it , nor thought upon at the first or last time at the swearing and subscribing thereof, how it cometh to passe that they never took the Covenant in their mouth, but in this one Article? Are they not bound by their Covenant, and the same clause of this supplication, cited by them, to their mutuall concurrence and assistance for the cause of Religion ? and to stand, with their means & lives, to the defence thereof, in the doctrine and discipline of the Kirk of Scotland? and to live godly, soberly, & righteously in this present world? True Conscience of duty and sincirity in keeping the Covenant, will make the obedience universall. Secondly, seeing the Petitioners would only have unitie in Religion , and uniformitie in Kirk-Government advanced by Christian wishes and fair meanes' , and yet insinuateth their offer by armes to decide the municipall debates of England , anent Civill matters, while the Civill and Ecclesiastick Judicatories , and the rest of this Kirk and Kingdome are desiring an Assembly , and a Parliament , to consider their interest and duty, and to contribute their best endeavours (in what is above the power of their Commissioners) to further this unitie of Religion, and remove these diffractiōns in England, we ask, whether they presume that they alone keep the Covenant, and would render unto Christ which is Christ's , and unto Cesar which is Cesars , and that all others are Covenant-breakers ? Thirdly, do they not know that the Covenant was subscribed in the years , 1581. and 1591. before King James was King of England ? and that in the particular Heads and Articles , it is qualified by expresse limitations and restrictions to this *Kirk and Kingdome , to the Religion,*

Lawes and Liberties of Scotland: therefore can no more be extended to municipall debates , and to the Lawes and Liberties of England , unto which we are strangers, then the Kingdome of England can judge of our Lawes, and determine our differences , the two Kingdomes being still independent,¬ subordinate one to another but parallell , which is more at large expressed in the beginning of the treaty of Peace : Nor is the sending of our Forces into Ireland a necessary duty of our Covenant , but a voluntary testimony of our high respects to our King, and of our brotherly kindnesse to the Kingdome of England , as was expressed by the estates in the last Parliament. Fourthly, do not the Petitioners observe the limitations expressly contained in the words cited by themselves, according to the *Lawes of this Kingdome and duty of good Subjects*? which some of them may remember was interpreted in the Assembly , as if it had been said within this Kingdome; nor was there ever any law of this Kingdome of further extent : A law and Treaty there is , we know, forbidding it. Fifthly, may they not learne from the printed Letter, that the Kings Majestie expresseth not his confidence of assistance from Scotland, upon any ground or article of the Covenant , which His Majestie knoweth to be so obligatory among us, but from the obedience, duty and affection of His Subjects of Scotland , without any mention of our Covenant ? But such is the supererogation of some of the Petitioners above what His Majestie requires, that they will put a tye of the Covenant upon us , where G O D and the King hath left us free. Thus have we related the interpretation of the Covenant made by the Assembly , and vindicate that clause of the Covenant , which is so far perverted by this Petition.

The Petitioners hearing that their Petition had given offence to the Commissioners of the Assembly , and that

we

we were about the examination and censuring thereof, did direct four of their number with another Petition to give satisfaction to the exceptions that might be taken against them, as is contained in their Remonstrance which they exhibite for that end: But when in a calme and quiet conference, all the particular reasons above-written, were represented unto them, and all means used to move them to part from their Petition, they could not be induced, neither in the name of others that had sent them, nor for themselves, to acknowledge the smalleſt error either in the matter of their Petition, or in the manner of their petitioning; only they made offer to joyn with us the Commissioners of the Assembly in a new Petition for Unitie of Religion, and gave ſuch glosses and interpretations upon the clauses of their Petition, which were moſt excepted againſt, as could neither conſift with the words nor ſcope of the contrivers and authors. And therefore being desired and earnestly dealt with, they not only refuſed to declare under their hands that no other thing was meant in the Petition, then they had by word expreſſed, but alſo did ſhuſt to allow or permit us, the Commissioners of the Assembly, to declare ſo much in their names, as was contained in their own verball expreſſions, intending that the Petition ſhould go through this and the neighbouring Kingdomes for the ends for which it was deuifeſt, and especially into England, for frustrating all that hath been done, or is now in doing by this Kirk and Kingdome, out of their pious intention, and by their publick endeavours for unitie of Religion, and the peace of the two Kingdomes: And in the mean time that nothing ſhould be extant from them or their confeſſions and interpretations in the contrary.

In this caſe we judge it neceſſary, and finde it ihcum-bent to us to emit this Declaration, for vindicating our preſent

present and by-past proceedings : for our silence and conivence were a breach of our dutie to G O D , a neglect of the charge and trust committed unto us by the Generall Assembly, an occasion as well of divisions at home, as of jealousies and mis-understandings betwixt the Kingdomes, a confirmation of Petitioners in their errour, & an indirect approbation of their Petition ; as likewise a cause of stumbling and doubting to others who shall read or hear of such a Petition , especially to those, who through want of discerning , are not able to prove things that are different, might be easily deceived by their pretexts and sophistifications. We are not ignorant that this Petition doth very much reflect upon the Parliament, Privy Counsell, and the Conservators of Peace; but this we leave to the wise consideration of these civill Judicatories, as they shall finde themselves concerned: we have contained our selves within our proper Spheare , not daring to neglect our own duty , while wee forbear to meddle with that which pertaines to others.

The Petitioners are not all of one kinde and dispositiōn of heart , but are unequally yoked against the Work of God. Some of them are known , and some of them have been conceived to be Malignants and Incendiaries from the beginning: but God forbid that they should now by opposing unitie in Religion and Peace, prove enemies to all Religion and Righteousnesse ; for then will it be both thought and spoken, that all this time past they have been lying in wait for the season, when their malignancie might appear; and it will be observed, that they who were of late at distance amongst themselves, are now at agreement; and that like Samsons foxes , they turn taile to taile with firebrands in the midst, to burn up the husbandrie of G O D , when now the fields are white for the harvest. It cannot be the cause of God which is not either secretly or openly opposed

opposed by men of perverse mindes ; nor can blinded mindes and hardened hearts , till God touch them by his power , choose but secretly or openly oppose the truth and cause of God. And therefore it is very necessary that such men take heed unto themselves,lest by their fulnesse of all subtletie and mischief , and their not ceasing to pervert the right wayes of the Lord , they bee found to bee fighting against God , which will prove bitternesse in the end : Others there be who have joyned in this Petition (to judge charitably) not from opposition to the unitie of Religion,they having done and suffered so much , and hazarded all for the Reformation of Religion at home , but partly out of unwillingnesse to refuse or displease their friends to whom they are obliged by naturall or other particular bands , and partly by reason of the specious pretences in the Petition , not considering the bad intentions of the contrivers , or the dangerous importance and consequence of the Petition it self: Let such men, to whom the Commissioners of the Assembly wish all true happinesse,seriously think as well upon the condition of the work , and the quality of the company with whom they joyne ,as upon their own intentions, lest they wrong both themselves ; and the cause of God, contrary to their desires, and more then they are aware of ; and let them remember how dangerous it is to walke in the counsell of the ungodly , for their soules to come into their secret, and their glory to be joyned with that Assembly. If counsell be like the principall agent, consent is like the instrument ; and to be instruments of , or accessorie unto the hinderance of the intended , and so much desired unitie of Religion , which maketh so fair a way for the Kingdome of Christ through the Earth , how great a sin is it? and how great a sorrow shall it be ?

All this we have thought good to expresse concerning

that divisive Petition, and those who are joyned together in it, being cast in our way as a stumbling block and rock of offence , for hinderance of the work of God, both at home and abroad. And as we exhort and warne all the People of God in this Land to observe them who cause divisions and offences , and to avoid them ; So we hope assuredly , that no such courses , nor counsells shall prosper , as do tend directly or indirectly , to the stopping of the course of the Gospel, or to the suppression of Religion and Reformation, and that God Almighty shall against all impediments carry forward this his blessed and glorious Work, to the glory of his great Name , to the advancement of the Kingdome of his Son Jesus Christ , to the destruction of Antichrist , to the firme Peace and

happy Union of all His Majesties Dominions in Religion , and to His Majesties

Honour and Happinesse: Whom

GOD preverve to raign
long and prosp-
roulously over us.

F I N I S.



At Edinburgh the eighteenth day of
January, 1643.

The Commissioners appointed by the Kings Majestie, and his Parliament of Scotland, for conserving the Articles of the Treaty, Doe finde that the Petition given in to his Majesties Privie Councell by some Noblemen and Gentlemen upon the 10. of this moneth, doth tend to the hinderance of their proceedings and endeavours in this publick Work committed to them by the Kings Majestie, and Parliament: And that it is prejudicall to the authority of this Commission, the same being in opposition of what was that day recommended by the saids Commissioners to the Councell. And ordaine this Act to be published for stopping all farther progresse of that or other Petitions of that kinde, And that it be printed with the Declaration of the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly made hereanent.

Sic subscriptitur

Arch. Primerose Cler. Commiss.

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